

Effective 5/10/2016

Part 18
Competency-based Education Grants Program

53A-15-1801 Title.

This part is known as "Competency-Based Education Grants Program."

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1802 Definitions.

As used in this part:

- (1) "Blended learning" means a formal education program in which a student learns:
 - (a) at least in part, through online learning with some element of student control over time, place, path, and pace;
 - (b) at least in part, in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; and
 - (c) in a program in which the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.
- (2) "Board" means the State Board of Education.
- (3) "Competency-Based education" means a system where a student advances to higher levels of learning when the student demonstrates competency of concepts and skills regardless of time, place, or pace.
- (4) "Extended learning" means learning opportunities outside of a traditional school structure, including:
 - (a) online learning available anywhere, anytime;
 - (b) career-based experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
 - (c) community-based projects; and
 - (d) off-site postsecondary learning.
- (5) "Grant program" means the Competency-Based Education Grants Program created in this part.
- (6) "Institution of higher education" means an institution listed in Section 53B-1-102.
- (7) "Local education agency" or "LEA" means:
 - (a) a school district;
 - (b) a charter school; or
 - (c) the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.
- (8) "Review committee" means the committee established under Section 53A-15-1803.
- (9) "STEM" means science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1803 Competency-Based Education Grants Program -- Board duties -- Review committee -- Technical assistance training.

- (1) There is created the Competency-Based Education Grants Program consisting of the grants created in this part to improve educational outcomes in public schools by advancing student mastery of concepts and skills through the following core principles:
 - (a) student advancement upon mastery of a concept or skill;
 - (b) competencies that include explicit, measurable, and transferable learning objectives that empower a student;
 - (c) assessment that is meaningful and provides a positive learning experience for a student;

- (d) timely, differentiated support based on a student's individual learning needs; and
 - (e) learning outcomes that emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.
- (2) The grant program shall incentivize an LEA to establish competency-based education within the LEA through the use of:
- (a) personalized learning;
 - (b) blended learning;
 - (c) extended learning;
 - (d) educator professional learning in competency-based education; or
 - (e) any other method that emphasizes the core principles described in Subsection (1).
- (3) The board shall:
- (a) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, adopt rules:
 - (i) for the administration of the grant program and awarding of grants; and
 - (ii) to define outcome-based measures appropriate to the type of grant for an LEA that is awarded a grant under this part to use to measure the performance of the LEA's plan or program;
 - (b) establish a grant application process;
 - (c) in accordance with Subsection (4), establish a review committee to make recommendations to the board for:
 - (i) metrics to analyze the quality of a grant application; and
 - (ii) approval of a grant application; and
 - (d) with input from the review committee, adopt metrics to analyze the quality of a grant application.
- (4)
- (a) The review committee shall consist of STEM and blended learning experts, current and former school administrators, current and former teachers, and at least one former school district superintendent, in addition to other staff designated by the board.
 - (b) The review committee shall:
 - (i) review a grant application submitted by an LEA;
 - (ii) make recommendations to the LEA to modify the application, if necessary; and
 - (iii) make recommendations to the board regarding the final disposition of an application.
- (5)
- (a) The board shall provide technical assistance training to assist an LEA with a grant application under this part.
 - (b) An LEA may not apply for a grant under this part unless:
 - (i) a representative of the LEA attends the technical assistance training before the LEA submits a grant application; and
 - (ii) the representative is a superintendent, principal, or a person in a leadership position within the LEA.
 - (c) The technical assistance training shall include:
 - (i) instructions on completing a grant application, including grant application requirements;
 - (ii) information on the scoring metrics used to review a grant application; and
 - (iii) information on competency-based education.
- (6) The board may use up to 5% of an appropriation provided to fund this part for administration of the grant program.

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1804 Planning grants -- Requirements.

- (1)
- (a) The board shall, subject to legislative appropriations, award a planning grant to, subject to Subsection (1)(c), an LEA:
 - (i) that submits a planning grant application that meets the requirements established by the board, subject to Subsection (2);
 - (ii) if an LEA designee has attended the technical assistance training described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (iii) if the LEA planning grant application has been recommended by the review committee.
 - (b) An LEA that receives a grant under Subsection (1)(a) shall expend the grant funds no later than one calendar year after receiving the funds.
 - (c) The board may not select more than three LEAs to award planning grants to under this section.
- (2)
- (a) A planning grant application shall include evidence that the LEA:
 - (i) can provide a general description of the program the LEA would like to plan;
 - (ii) is intending to plan for:
 - (A) schoolwide implementation; or
 - (B) if the LEA intends to implement initially with a population smaller than schoolwide, phasing the plan in schoolwide or districtwide over a specified period of time;
 - (iii) can describe the types of partners that will help with the plan and, eventually, implement the program;
 - (iv) planning activities and program will focus on:
 - (A) implementation of the core principles described in Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (B) use of the methods, as applicable, described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (C) the outcome-based measures adopted by the board under Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (v) has:
 - (A) the capacity, qualifications, local governing body support, and time to successfully plan the program; and
 - (B) an intentional and feasible planning process;
 - (vi) will align the LEA's budget as necessary with the planning process; and
 - (vii) will communicate and promote the plan with parents, teachers, and members of the community.
 - (b) The board may adopt other requirements in addition to the requirements in Subsection (2)(a).

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1805 Implementation grants -- Requirements.

- (1)
- (a) The board shall, subject to legislative appropriations, award an implementation grant to, subject to Subsection (1)(c), an LEA:
 - (i) that submits an implementation grant application that meets the requirements established by the board, subject to Subsection (2);
 - (ii) if an LEA designee has attended the technical assistance training described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (iii) if the LEA implementation grant application has been recommended by the review committee.

- (b) An LEA that receives a grant under Subsection (1)(a) shall expend the grant funds no later than two calendar years after receiving the funds.
 - (c) An LEA is not eligible to receive an implementation grant under this section unless the board has previously awarded the LEA a planning grant under Section 53A-15-1804.
- (2)
- (a) An implementation grant application shall include evidence that the LEA:
 - (i) can logically articulate the proposed program's mission, theory of change, and the program's intended goals and outcomes;
 - (ii)
 - (A) program will have schoolwide implementation; or
 - (B) if the LEA intends to implement initially with a population smaller than schoolwide, program includes steps to phase the program in schoolwide or districtwide over a specified period of time;
 - (iii) has an understanding of similar programs and can use this knowledge to strengthen the LEA's program implementation;
 - (iv) program will focus on:
 - (A) direct alignment with the core principles described in Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (B) use of the methods, as applicable, described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (C) the outcome based measures adopted by the board under Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (v) program will address a need, determined by data, in the LEA or community;
 - (vi) has a strong evaluation plan that will clearly measure the success of the LEA's program against the stated goals and objectives;
 - (vii) has a list of signatures of key stakeholders and partners who are committed to implementing the program;
 - (viii) has the capacity, qualifications, local governing body support, and time to successfully implement this program;
 - (ix) has an intentional and feasible scope of work to implement the program;
 - (x) will align the LEA's budget as necessary with the planning process; and
 - (xi) will communicate and promote the plan with parents, teachers, and members of the community.
 - (b) The board may adopt other requirements in addition to the requirements in Subsection (2)(a).
- (3) A program under this section may include:
- (a) a waiver, subject to Section 53A-15-1807, of required school hours attended or traditional school calendar scheduling; and
 - (b) an adjustment of educator compensation to reflect the implementation of a waiver under Subsection (3)(a).

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1806 Expansion grants -- Requirements.

- (1)
- (a) The board shall, subject to legislative appropriations and to expand an existing LEA program schoolwide or districtwide, award a grant to, subject to Subsection (1)(c), an LEA:
 - (i) that submits an expansion grant application that meets the requirements established by the board, subject to Subsection (2);
 - (ii) if an LEA designee has attended the technical assistance training described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (iii) if the LEA expansion grant application has been recommended by the review committee.

- (b) An LEA that receives a grant under Subsection (1)(a) shall expend the grant funds no later than two calendar years after receiving the funds.
 - (c) An LEA is not eligible to receive an expansion grant under this section unless the board has previously awarded the LEA an implementation grant under Section 53A-15-1805.
- (2)
- (a) An expansion grant application shall include evidence that the LEA:
 - (i) has an established program that:
 - (A) has successfully met previous goals;
 - (B) has shown outcomes that are in alignment with the core principles described in Section 53A-15-1803 and used methods, as applicable, described in Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (C) is supported by LEA management and leadership;
 - (D) is suitable for expansion schoolwide or districtwide; and
 - (E) is the program, with any necessary modifications, that the LEA plans to expand if awarded the expansion grant;
 - (ii) can logically articulate the LEA's program mission, theory of change, and the program's intended goals and outcomes;
 - (iii) program as proposed for expansion is focused on:
 - (A) direct alignment with the core principles identified in Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (B) use of the methods, as applicable, described in Section 53A-15-1803; and
 - (C) the outcome based measures adopted by the board under Section 53A-15-1803;
 - (iv) that the program will directly address a need, determined by data, in the LEA or community;
 - (v) has clearly articulated core components that ensure, when expanded, the program will yield positive outcomes;
 - (vi) has a strong evaluation plan that will clearly measure the success of the LEA's program against the stated goals and objectives;
 - (vii) has a list of signatures of key stakeholders and partners who are committed to expanding the program;
 - (viii) has the capacity, qualifications, local governing body support, and time to successfully expand the program;
 - (ix) has an intentional and feasible scope of work to expand the program;
 - (x) has a strategic budget that is aligned with the LEA's scope of work; and
 - (xi) will communicate and promote the plan with parents, teachers, and members of the community.
 - (b) The board may adopt other requirements in addition to the requirements in Subsection (2)(a).
- (3) A program under this section may include:
- (a) a waiver, subject to Section 53A-15-1807, of required school hours attended or traditional school calendar scheduling; and
 - (b) an adjustment of educator compensation to reflect the implementation of a waiver under Subsection (3)(a).

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1807 Waiver from board rule -- Board recommended statutory changes.

- (1) An LEA may apply to the board in a grant application submitted under this part for a waiver of a board rule that inhibits or hinders the LEA from accomplishing its goals set out in its grant application.
- (2) The board may grant the waiver, unless:
 - (a) the waiver would cause the LEA to be in violation of state or federal law; or

- (b) the waiver would threaten the health, safety, or welfare of students in the LEA.
- (3) If the board denies the waiver, the board shall provide in writing the reason for the denial to the waiver applicant.
- (4)
 - (a) The board shall request from each LEA that receives a grant under this part for each year the LEA receives funds:
 - (i) information on a state statute that hinders an LEA from fully implementing the LEA's program; and
 - (ii) suggested changes to the statute.
 - (b) The board shall, in a written report, provide any information received from an LEA under Subsection (4)(a) and the board's recommendations to the Legislature no later than November 30 of each year.

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session

53A-15-1808 Cooperation of institutions of higher education -- Transferring students not to be penalized.

- (1) An institution of higher education:
 - (a) shall recognize and accept on equal footing as a traditional high school diploma a high school diploma awarded to a student who successfully completes an educational program that uses, in whole or in part, competency-based education; and
 - (b) cooperate with an LEA:
 - (i) as applicable, to facilitate the advancement of a student who attends a competency-based education program; and
 - (ii) as requested, in the development of an LEA plan or program under this part.
- (2) If a student attending an LEA that establishes competency-based education within the LEA transfers to another school within the LEA or to another LEA entirely that does not have a competency-based education program, the student may not be penalized by being required to repeat course work that the student has successfully completed, changing the student's grade, or receive any other penalty related to the student's previous attendance in the competency-based education program.

Enacted by Chapter 347, 2016 General Session